

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In response to the Office Action dated February 22, 2005, claims 1, 3 and 7 are amended, claims 2 and 12 are canceled, and claim 13 is added. Claims 1, 3-11 and 13 are now active in this application.

The indication that claims 9 and 10 are allowable is acknowledged and appreciated.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS UNDER 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 1, 7, 8 and 11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Souma et al. (USPN 6,345,109) in view of Ichikawa (USPN 5,917,957).

The indication that claims 2-6 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims is acknowledged and appreciated also.

To expedite prosecution, independent claim 1 is amended to include all the limitations of dependent claim 2, now cancelled, independent claim 11 is amended to include all the limitations of dependent claim 12, now cancelled, and claim 3 is amended to depend from amended claim 1. Consequently, claims 1, 3-6 and 11, as amended, are believed to be allowable.

Independent claim 7 is amended to include the limitations of dependent claim 2, also. Thus, amended independent claim 7 is believed to be allowable for the same reasons as amended independent claim 1 is allowable, as is claim 8 depending from amended claim 7.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, it is urged that the application, as now amended, is in condition for allowance, an indication of which is respectfully solicited. If there are any outstanding issues

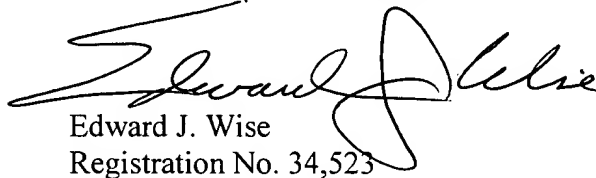
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that might be resolved by an interview or an Examiner's amendment, Examiner is requested to call Applicants' attorney at the telephone number shown below.

To the extent necessary, a petition for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. 1.136 is hereby made. Please charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account 500417 and please credit any excess fees to such deposit account.

Respectfully submitted,

McDERMOTT WILL & EMERY LLP



Edward J. Wise
Registration No. 34,523

600 13th Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20005-3096
Phone: 202.756.8000 EJW:cac
Facsimile: 202.756.8087
Date: May 23, 2005

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